CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

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UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Letter dated 7 February 1966 from the Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations

On 7 February I received a letter, addressed to me as co-Chairman of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, from the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic, Mr. Georg Stibi. The letter accompanies a Statement of the Government of the German Democratic Republic on the Conclusion of a Treaty on the Strict Prohibition of the Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It also contains a request to bring the aforementioned Statement of the Government of the German Democratic Republic to the notice of all the States participating in the Committee.

I request you to arrange for the aforementioned Statement of the Government of the German Democratic Republic, which has a direct bearing on the problem of disarmament, to be circulated by the Secretariat as an official document of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

(signed) S.Tsarapkin

Representative of the USSR
in the Eighteen-Nation Committee on
Disarmament

66-04561

Geneva, 7 February 1966

Mr. S.K. Tsarapkin,

Co-Chairman of the Eighteen-Nation Committee
on Disarmament,

Geneva.

Sir,

On the instructions of the Government of the German Democratic Republic, I have the honour to transmit to you a Statement of the Government of the German Democratic Republic addressed to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, and request you to bring this document to the attention of all the States members of the Committee.

The questions raised in this document have a direct bearing on the problems with which the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament is directly concerned and, in particular, on the question of concluding a treaty on the strict prohibition of the further proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Stibi

Deputy Minister for
Foreign Affairs

Statement 1/

of the Government of the German Democratic Republic to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament on the Conclusion of a Treaty on the Strict Prohibition of the Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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The Government of the German Democratic Republic welcomes with genuine satisfaction that the Twentietn Session of the United Nations General Assembly has directed the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament to discuss as an urgent problem the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and to prepare the concluding of an international treaty banning the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic is fully convinced that the conclusion of a world-wide treaty banning the proliferation of nuclear weapons, without any loop-holes and precluding any form of dissemination of nuclear weapons both direct and indirect, would fully conform with the peace efforts of the peoples and their desire for lasting security. However, there are serious obstacles blocking the way towards a speedy implementation of the Resolution of the United Nations General Assembly.

Unfortunately, the Governments of the United States of America and the West German Federal Republic insist upon establishing a nuclear strike force within NATO which will inevitably lead to a proliferation of nuclear weapons, or upon creating some other organisation which will extend the right of control over nuclear weapons to the present non-nuclear states. It is particularly the demands of the Government of the West German Federal Republic for a share in the control over nuclear weapons, or participation in a NATO nuclear strike force, which cause concern among the peoples and prevent the conclusion of an international non-proliferation treaty.

For historical reasons the peoples and peace-loving governments distrust the West German claims for a share in the control or for direct control over nuclear weapons. These claims all the more evoke apprehension since the West German Government is the only European government which is once again making territorial claims on other states - just as German imperialism between the two world wars. The gravity of such apprehensions cannot be extenuated by appealing to an alleged right to military equality within NATO, either.

1/ Translation provided by the USSR delegation

Long before Hitler came to power, the army and the diplomats in the Weimar Republic demanded "military equality for Germany on principle," which, unfortunately, was conceded by Great Britain, the USA, France, and Italy in December 1932. Even then the German army and diplomats made assurances that they would only make limited use of their military equality and would be satisfied with a few specimen tanks, aircraft and heavy artillery. Hitler profited from this policy of the Weimar Republic when preparing his immeasurable war crimes. It is an inexcusable crime just as much against the German people as world peace to renew, after three and a half decades, the demands for "military equality on principle" because it is the demand for a share in the control over nuclear weapons, or even a limited possession of nuclear weapons, and serves to prepare a third world war - a nuclear world war.

On account of the bitter historical experiences which must be a permanent warning to all peoples of the world, the Government of the German Democratic Republic holds the view that the two German states are under special obligation, in accordance with the Resolution of the Twentieth Session of the United Nations General Assembly (2028/XX), "to take all necessary steps for the early conclusion of a treaty preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons."

Therefore, the Government of the German Democratic Republic has appealed anew to the Government of the West German Federal Republic, demanding:

Let us as Germans in the two German states renounce any kind of possession and power of control over nuclear weapons!

Let us as Germans make a joint contribution to help remove the obstacles that still stand in the way of the conclusion of a world-wide non-proliferation treaty!

Let us join in making a first step towards disarmament and thus towards a rapprochement between the two German states with a view to national reunification, by renouncing nuclear weapons!

The Government of the German Democratic Republic solemnly declares to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament that it is ready to enter into such a commitment, binding under international law, on the renunciation of nuclear weapons, provided that the West German Government expresses the same readiness.

At the same time, the Government of the German Democratic Republic calls on the Government of the West German Federal Republic to make a similar statement to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament and thus remove an essential obstacle which is preventing a successful completion of the preparations for a strict world-wide non-proliferation treaty.

In making this proposal to the Government of the West German Federal Republic, the Government of the German Democratic Republic at the same time calls upon the nuclear powers, in so far as they have nuclear weapons on German soil, to withdraw these nuclear weapons from German territory and in future keep it free of nuclear weapons.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic expresses the expectation that, if the two German states renounce nuclear weapons and the foreign nuclear weapons are removed from German territory, the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament and the General Assembly of the United Nations will bring their influence to bear on all nuclear powers so that the German people is given firm and lasting guarantees that German soil, German towns and villages will never become targets of nuclear weapons.

Such a twofold safeguarding for Central Europe, the focus of two world wars, against the danger of a nuclear war will be an inestimable contribution towards general disarmament and the preservation and safeguarding of world peace.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic renews its assurance that it will do everything in its power to contribute to a successful solution of the tasks that have been entrusted to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament by the United Nations General Assembly with a view to bringing about general disarmament and guaranteeing world peace.